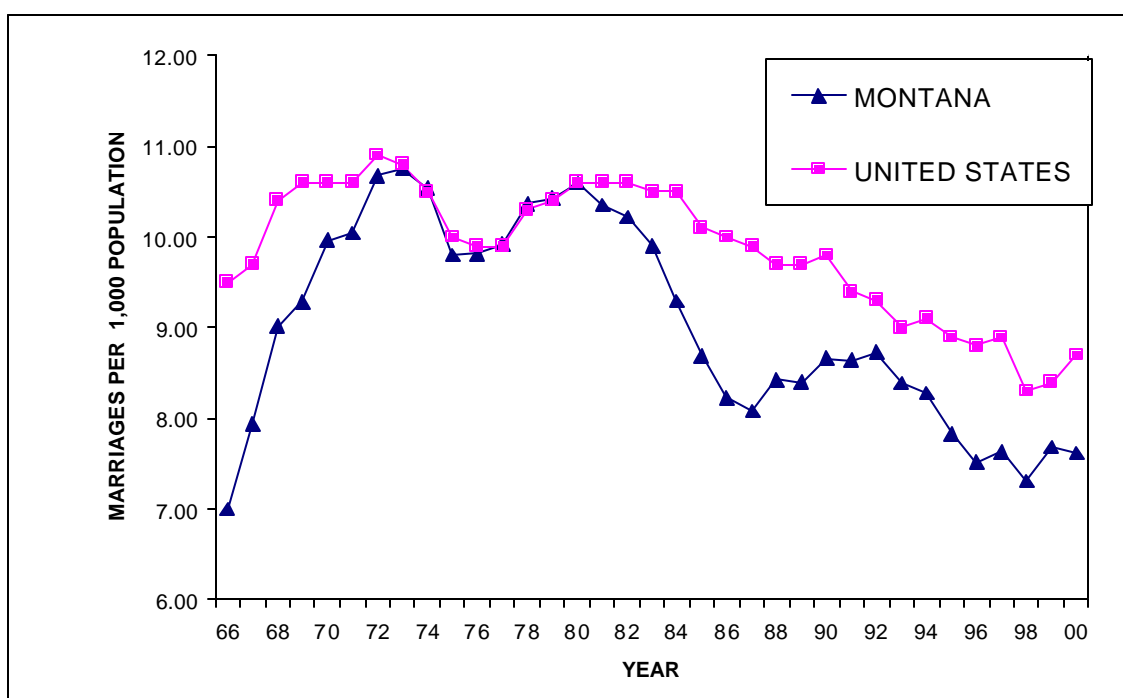


## MARRIAGE

There were 6,870 marriages solemnized in Montana in 2000, an increase in the number but decrease in the previous year's rate. Except for a brief resurgence in Montana's rate between 1988 and 1992, the trends in marriage rates for both Montana and the United States have been in long-term decline since 1980 (see **Figure 60**).

**Figure 60**

### MARRIAGE RATES MONTANA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1966-2000



**Table 22** shows the frequency of marriage by month. In the last decade, approximately 60% of the marriages solemnized in Montana occurred during the summer and fall months (June through October).

The ages of brides and grooms, by age groups and prior marital status, are shown in **Table 23**. More than 63% of the grooms and nearly 62% of the brides married for the first time in 2000. Median ages of brides and grooms for the previous five years are shown in **Table 25**. The median age of all brides in 2000 was 27 years and that of all grooms was 29.

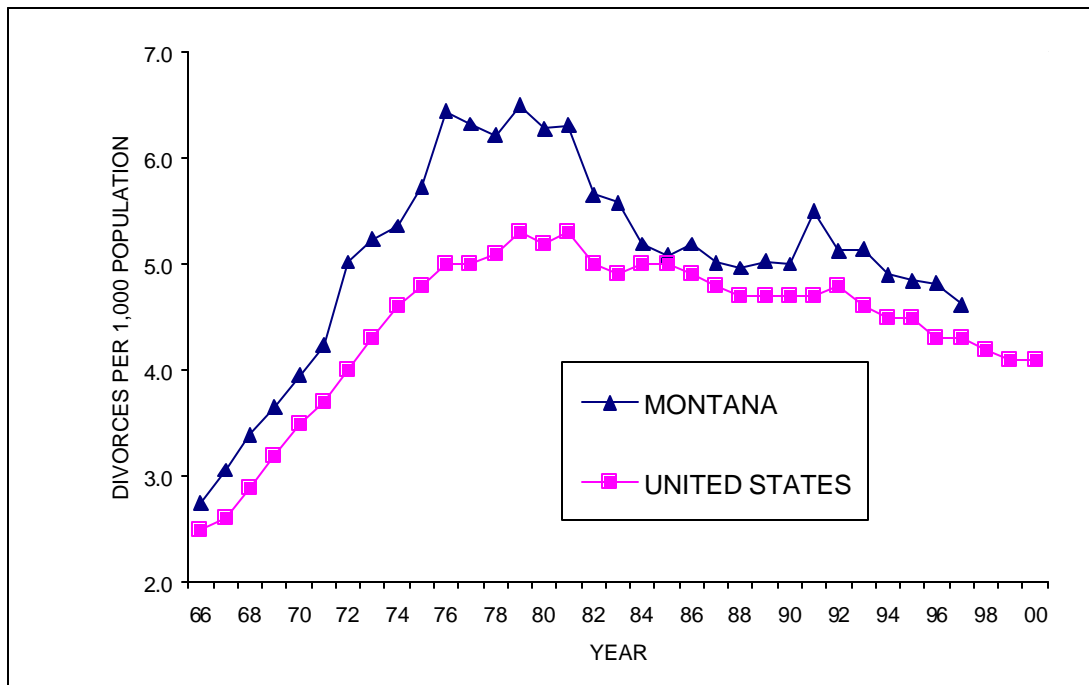
Just over half (52.0 %) of all marriages performed in Montana in 2000 were first marriages for both the bride and the groom. The frequency of such marriages is shown in **Table 24** by age of bride and groom. In 2000, nearly half (48.8 %) of those marrying for the first time, and marrying a first-time bride or groom, were in the same five-year age group as their spouse.

## MARITAL TERMINATION

Marital termination (marital dissolution and invalid marriage) records for 2000 are not yet available for analysis. However, it can be seen that the trend in marital termination for Montana has been roughly parallel to the national trend since 1965, as **Figure 61** shows, although the Montana rates have been consistently higher.

**Figure 61**

### MARITAL TERMINATION RATES MONTANA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1966-2000



Montana's rate of marital termination per 1,000 population is shown in **Table 21**. During the past 20 years, this rate decreased from a high of 6.5 in 1979 to 4.6 in 1997.